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CR - AFRALO / AfrICANN Join

Wednesday, March 14, 2012 – 14:00 to 15:00

ICANN - San Jose, Costa Rica

Fatimata Seye Sylla: [Speaking French]

Pascal Bekono: Pascal Bekono, ICANN (inaudible).

Mary Uduma: Mary Uduma is my name and I am the GAC rep for Nigeria.

Male: Hello, I belong to AfriCANN.

Male: (inaudible) from (inaudible), South Africa.

Neil Dundas: Neil Dundas from (inaudible) Central Registry, South Africa.

Male: (inaudible) from (inaudible) registry.

Tarek Kamel: Tarek Kamel from Egypt.

Silvia Vivanco: Silvia Vivanco, ICANN.

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Heidi Ullrich: Heidi Ullrich, ICANN.

Aziz Hilali: Aziz Hilali from Morocco, Secretariat.

Steve Crocker: Steve Crocker, Chair of the ICANN Board.

Fatimata Seye Sylla: Fatima Seye Sylla, AFRALO.

Tijani Ben Jemaa: Tijani Ben Jemaa, AFRALO.

Olivier Crépin-Leblond: Olivier Crépin-Leblond, ALAC Chair.

Sebastien Bachollet: Sebastien Bachollet, member of the Board of ICANN.

Grace Githaiga: Grace Githaiga, Kenya.

Female: (Inaudible) from Senegal, ICANN Fellow.

Wilson Abigaba: Wilson Abigaba from Uganda.

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Ope Odusan: Ope Odusan, .ng

Male: (Inaudible), Nigeria

Jean-Jacques Subrenat: Jean-Jacques Subrenat, ALAC member.

Female: AFRALO.

Renny Nweke: Renny Nweke, (Inaudible) Board member, Nigeria.

Male: (Inaudilbe), Nigeria.

Victor Ciza: Victor Ciza, Burundi, [.bi] ccTLD.

Yaovi Atohoun: Yaovi Atohoun, AFRALO, ALAC.

Michele Tchonang: Michele Tchonang, Capda, Cameroon

Karim Attoumani Mohamed: Karim Attoumani Mohamed, GAC representative for the Comoros Islands

Male: I come from Ivory Coast.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Well thank you very much for having come. We are so many at this meeting that it's a pleasure for us to meet here in Costa Rica for the ICANN meeting, and now we're used to this. Every ICANN meeting we hold our own meeting among us Africans to discuss what's important to us. Among these issues, which are addressed at the ICANN level, the subject which brings us here today is of course the program for applicants as regards to new gTLDs.

I don't want to drag on this, but I would like to discuss this and give the floor to Olivier Crépin-Leblond, the President of ALAC who will be doing a brief introduction before we go on.

Olivier Crépin-Leblond:

Thank you Fatimata. And as I understand you have little time for my introduction, so I will be very brief. I remember the conference we had in Dakar in Senegal and we had wonderful participation from all At-Large structures, all ALSes from Africa who belong to AFRALO. I would like to remind you that since that conference we had a growing participation from African ALSes throughout ALACs processes; in working groups, in teleconferences. And it's wonderful to see that a community is more and more active within the development of ICANN policies, and of course through ALAC and through our RALO, ALAC and Board processes.

It is absolutely paramount that all countries in Africa see this is for them to be a part of this system, of this bottom-up system that we have in ICANN. And so every member here, whether it is African members or – if there are no At-Large structures in your country please I would like to you identify possible or potential organizations to join the At-Large structures and AFRALO through the accreditation processes. I won't spend any more time talking about this, but I think it's great to see that so many people join around the table to discuss this applicant support program for instance, and it's clear to us that ALAC has supported this preparation, this joint application support program, the JAS

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Program as we call it. And so I wish you a wonderful meeting and I hope to see you at our next meeting in Prague. Anyway, let's get to work.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you very much Olivier. We have also the honor of having Steve Crocker with us. He is the CEO of ICANN and we're going to give the floor to him in order for him to speak to us.

Steve Crocker:

The very first thing is, at least the translation that I heard is that I'm the CEO of ICANN which is not right. So there's plenty of rumors floating around and I need to kill that one absolutely. I do have the honor of Chairing the Board of ICANN and fortunately the Board is much smaller than all of ICANN and that's about all I can handle. Yeah well, careful what you wish for.

And Fatimata you very graciously said you have the honor of my presence but I think it's really quite the reverse. It is distinctly my honor to be invited here and to be here and to welcome you. You all have come a long distance and it's not easy. I spend too much time on airplanes, but I come from a more advantaged way of position that makes travel easier. We know from quite a lot of experience that it's harder from your part of the world.

ICANN is a complicated and very exciting meeting place for people from all over the world. And we face the challenge of trying to provide a uniform and equal access into the processes for everybody, and yet we know that the needs and the modes of communication and a lot of different variables vary depending upon cultures, depending upon location, depending upon other circumstances.

One of the things that comes out of this kind of interaction is learning a great deal about each other. And so I think one of the things that we would like, and I'll speak "We" as the "Board" and I think "We" as the "Staff" and in general, the ICANN community is to understand much more about the very special nature of the African community. And so let me invite you that among the other deliberations that you take on, is to be perhaps even uncommonly

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forthright and forward and tell us the things that you think we need to know. Feel free to ask questions and generally engage.

The AFRALO Summit that took place last time was an historic first and was enormously successful. One of the consequences of that is that the people in this region, Latin American Caribbean region instantly said “Oh we have to do that too.” So it was like sibling rivalry and you have a jealous sister or a brother, and I think that was extremely healthy. I think that was exactly the right thing. So I applaud your initiative and your leadership there.

I understand that you’re going to have a discussion very pointfully about the applicant support; I apologize that my colleague Sebastien Bachollet and I cannot stay. We are supposed to be, I’m supposed to be Chairing an internal meeting of the Board this very minute. And so I’m here to welcome you, to congratulate you, and to express a quite strong appreciation for your effort and quite strong anticipation and eagerness to see the results that come from this and to look forward to continued engagement. Thank you very much.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you very much Steve. I think this was just wishful thinking to get you promoted to a higher rank. Thank you for being with us.

Steve Crocker:

So I bid adieu, with apologies.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Okay yes. Thank you, Sebastien. Okay, now we are going to the important part of our issue. We wanted to ask Avri to speak, but we have Avri’s brother, Tijani, who wants to speak. So Tijani is going to present us the program of the applicant.

Tijani Ben Jemaa:

Thank you Fatimata. As you all know when the program of the new gTLD was initiated, the cost of for the applicants was so high that the community criticized it a lot, criticized that cost and said that this program was for rich people, made by rich people and only for rich people. So the ICANN community worked on that issue. I remember the Nairobi meeting where there was a stronger argument, and we are happy to say that the last meeting of the Board during the Nairobi meeting, they announced a resolution that is well known that says that the Board invites the community to form a working group to see how we can help.

The new gTLD candidate or applicant who needs some support to present their request and to use the gTLDs, so the working group was formed by two constituencies who were ALAC and GNSO. Now this working group is called JAS; it is very well known. It's the JAS Working Group. It's worked for a long time. We had two conference calls per week and we produced a draft report and a final report and a second milestone report. And then we had the final report and recommendations of that working group, which was that we had to reduce the cost for the people who need support financial support and for the people whose request was accepted.

And we asked for a price reduction and for other supports, different kinds of supports, financial support and other kinds of support as the outreach, trainings, these kinds of things, so people is helped to present its application. So there are different kinds of assistance that were mentioned in this program. The Board accepted this principle of support and the Board decided to reduce the cost of the application under the working group, JAS, request for the candidate who meets the criteria.

It's not a question to give money to a person that won't be able to operate the registry and to lose money. So for people who ask for a string which will have public interest value. So, the Board blocked two million dollars for this issue and afterwards the Board constituted a group, formed a group made by five persons from the community, from the staff. And this group, implementation

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group produced a program that we are speaking about now, this support, applicant support program. And what do we notice in that program?

Well, there are different things. First, two million dollars is not enough to support. Fatimata told me that I have one minute left. Okay. It's not enough to support, it's enough to support only 14 candidates of applicants. There is a problem of outreach, of communication too because communication was made for the new gTLD program and for the support program too, but it was made only in some areas but not made in the areas where these applicants need the support.

So we think that it is a problem. It is useful to provide some support, if people doesn't know that support exists, the support program has taken into account a panel of evaluation of the support request that will be from five people from the community. And we think that to find some capabilities in the region that needs help, we have to tell them that this exists. So all that work has not been done and we think we are blocking the program and its result.

So I'll stop here because Fatimata is going to criticize me. Fatimata, you have the floor.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you Tijani for your introduction. I think that Tijani explained very well the problem. He gave us information to explain the process that took place and to speak about what is at stake and why we are meeting today. So we circulated on the list, we asked people if they were interested in that subject and this was the subject that was chosen. We constituted a working group which elaborate a draft that was distributed and Aziz is going to read it to us so that we can see how we are going to achieve an agreement on that issue. So Aziz, please read us the draft project we made.

Aziz Hilali:

Thank you Fatimata. So this statement from the ICANN African community is regards to the applicant support group for new gTLDs has been drafted in San



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Jose on Wednesday, March 14, 2012. So us members of AFRALO AfrICANN met in San Jose, have just adopted the recommendations from the ICANN group for the JAS Working Group which is aimed at supporting the applicants for those new gTLDs which need assistance both for the exploitation and for the creation of new gTLDs, and particularly for developing countries.

We recognize and appreciate that the establishment of the implementation group, that includes the Board community and staff members, we acknowledge that the group has developed the applicant support program, the ASP, which details the support process in its entirety. However, we wish to express our concern about the following issues. First, that the applicant support program has not been adequately nor marketed to those who may have an interest in this new program. And we think that in addition to the existing channels of promotion, in particular online, the ICANN needs to leverage events in those countries and send high level ICANN officers to such.

The goal would be to inform and persuade potential applicants from that country to join the support program, and to encourage regional companies to volunteer for the support panel to evaluate the various requests for support and to participate in such. Second that the program does not provide objective criteria for the evaluation of the applicant's financial needs. Therefore only an objective evaluation process will be used to decide whether or not the applicant meets the requirements to apply to this aid program, and we think that the objective criteria will ensure a fair decision making process so that this decision will be equal.

This has been made greater by the applicant support program which thinks that the funds will not be refunded to the applicants and this will be excluded from the new gTLD program where the people do not meet the criteria. Fourthly that the two million dollars allocated to this program will barely be sufficient to support 14 applicants. And that a review after this period of implementation needs to be integrated within the existing terms of reference.

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We consider that without the appropriate promotion of the applicant support program in the developing countries, and without the necessary objective criteria for the financial need evaluation, this program will not be successful. It will therefore not support the candidate's needs. And we recommend that the developing countries needs, which were the target of the 20<sup>th</sup> resolution from the Board in Nairobi in March 2010, and which was the base for the creation of the JAS Working Group.

We finally wish to underline the fact that without the experts' participation, that is experts from developing countries in the assessment or evaluation process, this program will not fit the inclusive, multi stakeholder model which ICANN wishes to ensure. Thank you.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you Aziz. Now we are going to give the floor to all the participants. Who wants to make some comments, suggestions, and amendments on this project, on the draft that we elaborated? Well I'm going to write down the queue of people who want to intervene. Pascal, you have the floor. What is your name? Karim, Jean-Jacques, (Inaudible)? Well, we have four persons who want to intervene. Pascal you have the floor.

Pascal Bekono:

Thank you. I'd like to thank you for the work you made, it was very well made, and to note that Africa is working and that the group is working very well according to the ICANN evolution. But I've read that declaration and I have some concern. We have seen that the closing date won't be postponed, so I don't know what the impact in that declaration. I can't see any proposal made, any concrete proposal made and I would like to have something saying we are proposing that for the next new gTLD program that there was those things. So what do you think if the closing date is not postponed? Maybe we can make some proposal for the future and propose that the funds will be only allocated for some people, certain people.

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Fatimata Seye Sylla: Thank you Pascal. Now we are going to give the floor to another person and then at the end we will react on this intervention. Karim, you have the floor.

Karim Attoumani Mohamed: Thank you very much. First I'd like to thank you for your initiative in your work, it was very well made. And I'd like to add after the concern that my colleague expressed, if that program, the date won't be postponed for that program beyond what was said in that letter in the GAC, we have also a lot of evaluation work that hasn't been done. So what we are saying here in terms of expertise and evaluation, we need to reinforce the role of the statement so that all the strings that will be used can be protected and so we can react before the problem. So the dates that have been announced, if those dates are not postponed we have to try to join, to get prepared to be efficient in the process of warning or any contest.

Fatimata Seye Sylla: Thank you Karim for your words. Now Jean-Jacques, you have the floor.

Jean-Jacques Subrenat: Thank you Madame Chair. I wanted to say two things. First, the funding. What you are speaking about today must be placed in a context in the background. And the background that I can see for this year and for the future years, is that globally we can say that ICANN will have new funding coming from the new gTLD domain names.

Potentially this can represent hundreds of millions of dollars. So the debate here that takes place in ICANN is we must know if that must be directly integrated as funding of ICANN budget or, and I'm among the people who proposed the second solution, or if you have to create an independent fund so as to dedicate this money to some projects. For example, projects for the developing countries

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or for the applicant needing some support. And this will be a way to use correctly new money, new revenue in big quantities.

So I'd like to ask you to remember that because the JAS is not only something we have to do for one year; it's work we have to do for the future. So we have to ask the members of the Board to have a continuity feeling in their responsibilities. It is very well to have decided to function like that okay, but there must be a vision in the long term, a long term vision. So this is why I mentioned this revenue source because this authorizes you to do some requests. Your request must be well structured of course.

The second question I wanted to approach here is some words of encouragement for those who have been working to define policy for the people who need some support. And I won't mention everybody, there are many people here and they all deserve our thanks, but I want to mention only one name because it is a friend of mine who is not here today. It's Katim Touray. We were together in the ICANN Board and at that time it was in the ICANN Board, it was one of the members of the Board who supported, very actively, this program. So I want to recognize the role that he played.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you very much Jean-Jacques for your words. I think they are recommendations that we can take into account. Now Tarek you have the floor.

Tarek Kamel:

Thank you Madame Chair. I'd like to make a few comments. First of all I am welcoming the initiative by the African At-Large community on this statement. And I'm happy about what has been mentioned concerning the amount of money, definitely two million US dollars is not enough. 14 applications is not enough for developing countries worldwide on a global level. So this number definitely needs to be revised. I also support the idea of having participation of experts from the developing country in the evaluation panels as well. Because this definitely gives a different perspective that experts from the US or Europe

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or wherever would not necessarily have. The evaluation needs legal expertise, technical expertise, business expertise and many other aspects. So having definitely the participation from the developing world is a big asset.

Just one point that has been mentioned here and I need that the group thinks about it. The issue of rejection of the application whenever it does not comply to the criteria of the financial aid that is requested. I see this as a plus for us in the developing world. Because it will prevent others from the developing countries really, they will think once and twice and three times before they start to apply for something under the model “let’s try, if it comes then fine, if it doesn’t come then we are still in the program.”

This will only make those apply who are in financial need. And who know “Fine, if I don’t get the financial need then I cannot afford to be within the track.” So this definitely opens opportunities for us in the developing world. So I would like that we revise this statement, this part of the statement, and maybe remove it because I see the plus, not necessarily a minus there for us. Fine, we might still include the issue of paying back the money. I see from ICANN point of view that it might be a legal issue because “how can I pay back the 47,000 and not pay back the 185,000 for the other applicants.” So this might definitely cause a legal problem. But the rejection, completely in my opinion, is a plus for us and not a minus.

My last comment is the Board has announced that there is a second round and I think we should not rely – the date I don’t know about; I don’t have that information – that the date of submission will be extended, but let us get prepared for the second round, definitely on a wider scale. And after we do the right outreach in the continent with the support as we mentioned, with the support of the ICANN and the financial support of ICANN from this problem. Thank you very much.

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Fatimata Seye Sylla: Thank you very much Tarek; very good input indeed. I would like to – I'm going to give the floor to Andrew Mack, but after that I would like to hear others about Tarek's proposal. So Andrew first.

Andrew Mack: Thank you. And because I've been speaking Spanish all week, I'm going to speak English now as opposed to torturing you with my French. A couple of things, first of all, with Tijani I was one of the core members of this JAS group and I will tell you that it has been a tremendous, tremendous effort. We met twice a week over more than two years; thousands and thousands of hours. And so it is very gratifying for me that we would get what I hear as a strong vote of support. I don't think that the final was perfect. There was some disagreements at the end, but it's a good document.

I agree absolutely with the sense, and I hope that people will go the microphone and say this, that two million dollars is an embarrassingly low amount of money given the importance of this issue, given the lack of reach into Africa specifically, and given where we know the internet is going globally. I think it is also embarrassing the amount of outreach, on this program specifically. Having been on the continent four times in the last five months, no one knows that this is happening.

I'm not saying that there have been no efforts made, but they were clearly inadequate to the task. We need to do more. Some of that is ICANN, some of that is us in this room sharing this information with our networks. But we really need to push ICANN. This is something that ICANN should be doing. With specific reference to the ideas about qualifications for financial need, I take your point this is a very difficult thing. And we struggled with this one a great deal. If you have some very specific suggestions I think that will be helpful; that will help move us along.

We had a group that was concerned, I think probably a bit too concerned about the idea of gaming. My inclination, and I think Tijani's is to push the program forward and get this out in the hands of the public, because the number of people

who would benefit would be much greater than the number of people who would game this system. There's not that much money on the table for these kinds of applications. But I think if you have some specific suggestions your voices will be listened to specifically because of who you are.

The last point is, there is going to be a real need for participation in this evaluation process. And it is extremely important that people from emerging markets, and from Africa specifically, try to get involved in this. We had some difference of opinion on whether or not that group should be paid or should be volunteer. Even if you cannot do it because it's too much time and effort, at least show ICANN that this is something that you are interested in happening. Because it is extremely important, we did a lot of this without hearing back from the community nearly as much as we had hoped to.

So to the extent that we can raise the volume around the JAS, and this will continue on as a process, will be very, very beneficial and we think will be helpful for everyone on the continent. Thank you.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you very much Andrew. Now the floor is for Yaovi, and then we'll have Eberhard.

Yaovi Atohoum:

Thank you Fatimata. I want to react as you requested with as what [Walter directly said]. I just want us to, this statement is fine for me, but my suggestion is that we look at the parts concerning the support. It's not very clear for me if all the applicants, it's like some of them will not get the 47 back, so it's a question I want Tijani to clarify. And so my suggestion is that we adopt this statement, my suggestion, and then we recommend that a small group look at this, the last sentence of that paragraph. That's my suggestion. But first, if Tijani can clarify if it is all the applications that are rejected that would not get the 47 back? Thank you.

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Fatimata Seye Sylla: Okay, maybe I will give the floor to Tijani on that point just for one minute.

Tijani Ben Jemaa: Thank you Fatimata. Thank you Yaovi. No. People who don't get funded because of the lack of money, they meet the criteria but they cannot be funded, they will be refunded; except the \$5000, the TAS cost. This is not refunded at all. But the SARP has the ability to judge if your application was done for gaming. And in this case the SARP can decide not to refund you at all.

Fatimata Seye Sylla: Okay, thank you Tijani. I think that's clear now. Eberhard and then Grace.

Eberhard Lisse: Eberhard Lisse from .na. I just wanted to respond briefly to what he said about local expertise. On a ccTLD we have no interest in any gTLD application, and I've instructed my business partner, who is the Dean of the Faculty of Sustainable Development at a local management university to apply for the evaluation group.

Fatimata Seye Sylla: Thank you very much, that's noted. Grace?

Grace Githaiga: I like this. My name is Grace. I'm from Kenya. I support this statement, but I'm also wondering – this question will sound strange but you need to understand it's my first time. Now, the idea of outreach, it's been clearly stated here that there was no outreach of the support program. But I'm wondering, as the Africa group, have we thought concretely of coming up with an outreach strategy because we are the ones who are affected. We do know what our challenges are. People in America will not be at the same level as us. Have we been proactive? And if we have not, can we start thinking of concretely coming up with an outreach and communications strategy so that we use the



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mechanisms that are available for us on the ground, and get more people to get on board to the support program.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you very much Grace. In fact, we were discussing about this yesterday; about how as Africans we can do to reach out, to sensitize people about this program. And we know that ICANN will be ready to send someone to talk about this program if we call on them. Now that's something of course we can do. And I agree with you, and I think almost everybody here will agree with her that we need to think about our own strategy. But still, I think ICANN also has its part to play by supporting or even organizing events just to allow African people and other developing countries people to know more about this program so that they can take profit from it.

Grace Githaiga:

Fatimata please. My concern is can we be proactive. Because I will tell you, like in Kenya, we are so tired of this thing. We want the government to help us. Can the government do this and this? So let's not also leave it to ICANN. Can we be proactive as an African group? Thank you.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you Grace. I think we're trying to be proactive by having this meeting. That's the first step. Because we are not waiting for ICANN to tell us "You African people, you need to be thinking about what's going to happen tomorrow," so I think we are trying to be proactive and you will be welcome to join us in doing so. Thank you very much. I think yes, Anne-Rachel and then Mary. Yay, women.

Anne-Rachel Inne:

Good afternoon everybody. Grace, I will be more than happy, and this is something that the whole of – oops. This is one thing that At-Large and quite a few people in the community have heard me say – when there is anything that

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we can help with as ICANN, and me particularly, by sending you information for example on things because we only have one person dedicated for this region. I can't be everywhere. I try to be at most of the meetings, big meetings where I can be to raise attention on this program.

I have done that, but for example, I didn't have any budget to go into big industry meetings that are paying. Okay, because you have to pay to go into a presentation and to distribute material and all those things for example. So this is one thing that definitely needs to happen more. But if you guys feel like at home, this is something that Renny has done for the past few years in Nigeria. They have a meeting called Digital Sense and I send them information on USB keys and one person in the community takes it upon themselves to talk about the issues that are raised here. And I work with them to make that happen.

So I'll be more than happy if you guys are taking the proactive step to make it happen, really no issues. Knock at the door.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you very much Anne-Rachel. Now the floor is to Mary who will be the last person to intervene, we have no more time and we wanted to answer the comments which has been made. Mary, you have the floor.

Mary Uduma:

Thank you Fatimata. I want to say that I support this statement, as others have said, but will need some amendment. Ann has taken some of the words out of my mouth. First is that I don't know whether ICANN has a strategy on how to communicate to our peculiar region, whether ICANN has allocated enough resources and there are no presence. We don't have ICANN presence in our region. So it becomes very difficult for even, and you know our region is predominately government driven. So for that reason, anything that doesn't go through the government will not get all that attention.

So we need, beyond the little ones we are doing, we need to also involve our government. Some of our TLDs are still with the, and the ccTLDs are still with

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the government. And most of us don't have ccTLDs developed in that we're still at our infancy. So those are issues that we need to do. ICANN needs to be visible in our region. And it needs to devote more resources for us in that region for communication; communication strategy must be very, very focused and strategic. So that we'll be able to reach those that are to be reached.

The little Renny is doing in Nigeria is not even going; I don't know the number of people that knew about new gTLD even when we shout it. So that presence is very, very key for us in the region. And then a strategy on how to communicate to us these things because it's the only way you'll know about the new gTLD in the region, that you know that it's subsidy. So we don't know all that.

So I think in the concluding part of this statement, as others have said, I demand that this is what we want, this is what we want, this is what we want – three things. One – communication strategy; two – presence; and three – devoting more resources. And again I think we are doing this a bit late, I hope we are not too late, but for the next round let's see how we do. And for other things we could do is to get our business people, the business people need to be communicated to. And we get that business people know about it, they will know that whether they are subsidized or not they will get money out of the program and they will invest. Thank you.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you Mary. I'm going to give the floor to Tijani to answer some questions. The first one is the question of Pascal saying that maybe it was too late and asking if what we are going to do will have some results. And I want to thank also all the people who support the declaration as it is. There were proposals made for amendment. I'd like to ask Tarek and Mary to draft their proposals. For Tarek I don't know if we came to a consensus about what he said on the denial of applicants who won't be accepted, the eligibility criteria.

Tijani Ben Jemaa:

Thank you Fatimata. I'm going to begin on the last point, the outreach issue. In Tunisia we made a journey all day working on new gTLDs and the support programs. I know the problem. This is why I organized that day. The problem is how to inform the people in their region. These regions are the regions who need help, not in America or in Europe. So I think it's true we have to count on ourselves, those who don't know it won't know it. The outreach is really a problem in our region.

The other issue or the other items regarding the fact that we are too late. The ICANN meetings are scheduled. We don't do that schedule, this is a normal meeting. This subject needs to be approached and if it is to ask people to participate and to request things, we have some time. We have time till the end of March. If ICANN wants we have time. And for the SARP applicants, no we have no time. There is no time. If each one of us do what he needs to do to do the outreach, to send the information to the important people, if we can find African capabilities or competencies.

Now, regarding what Jean-Jacques said, I thank him, what he said was very interesting. But the problem now is will there be a second round. They told us in the last weeks that there is going to be a second round, but on Monday in the new gTLD session, they said they didn't know if there will be a second round. So we don't know. Even though there is a second round, we don't know when that second round will take place. So this is an issue for us. And I want to add something; I want to be very sincere.

This first round, all the interesting names will be taken. So wait for the second round. Well you won't have the opportunity to ask for the domain name you wanted. So we have to think about the future. I agree with Jean-Jacques, we have to show the Board that we are waiting for the future. That we think that we have to find the fundings for the future and that it just has to go on working. Thank you Jean-Jacques.

Katim was one of the most important support for this program, he doesn't show it but I know that he made a lot of work in the Board, so things were made in the

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correct way. Now Tarek, I agree with you. If that the denial provision of the program was made, it is to avoid the problem, but we have to think about a small country asking for a string, a cultural string for example and who had trouble to find the \$47000 to make an application. He will pay the 5000. He will pay the rest. And if the applicant is denied, if the SARP thinks that it can be a fraud, they will have lost all their money.

So yes, it is true we are protected. I agree with you. And I am in the implementation group. I agree with that. But we have to see also, it was mentioned here for one reason. We mentioned it to say that the objective criteria for an evaluation were not added. And if there are no criteria of this kind there is a risk that we evaluate an applicant in a false way, in a bad way and we will make him lose his money.

So, last point. The two million dollars is not enough. It is the ICANN possibility we have to find other funding and with that amount we are only with 14 applicants.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you Tijani. I think that we are almost at the end of our meeting, our schedule. We have no more time. I'd like to speak about Mary's proposal and Grace's proposal too about the government implication and the private sector implication. I think here we have the private sector and the governments represented. ICANN is represented. And we have the civil society who had the idea to organize this meeting. So we are going to organize things to do this outreach, to inform people. But it is true; we have a lot of work to do.

I'd like to do a transition to allow Mohammed to present, very quickly in two minutes, his program.

Mohammed:

Thank you very much Tijani and Fatimata for giving me this opportunity to talk to you. I will be definitely brief and short. I would basically like to brief the community about the recent developments related to hopefully one of the

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African new gTLD applicants and we hope that we have many African new gTLDs in the application process definitely. So basically I would like to update you about the Africa project, because there is lots of community related activities now involved in that.

I'll be very brief and quick. I hope we have the slides. So basically some of you were following the news online that currently AUC has decided on an entity to manage, or at least apply for .africa. Briefly, currently the [ACR] which is the central registry uniform has been endorsed by AUC to be that applicant for .africa. and currently we're trying to have a community presentation, or at least a community driven application.

So a group of African Union Commission members met in [Jarburg] and a steering committee has been selected representing different stakeholders from registrars to ccTLD managers to internet experts. So this steering committee is basically AUC uniform plus other members from the community, and our objective is to ensure that the community is involved in this process. I have to slow down because the translators.

So basically the steering committees responsibility is supposed to be project oversight and provide the political, moral and ethical leadership and governance, plus a strategy and awareness of marketing. So you might know some of the members of the steering committee. It includes ccTLD managers from Malawi, from Kenya, from Egypt, AfriNIC is already involved, registrars involved. And recently we have AFRALO being part of the steering committee. We have Tijani with us in that steering committee.

The end goal is at the end to establish something called the .africa Foundation, a non-profit entity that should lead the project at later stages. Focus areas for this project should be African ccTLD development with partnerships through fTLD, and African registrars development and content development initiatives. And the project is related to ICT programs in general.

If you would like to know how the community is currently involved in this process we have the stakeholders – AUC, the African Union Commission as a

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sponsor of the project. And we have the registrar operator which is the ACR Central Registry. And we have fTLD involved as a community partner. The current steering committee will be dissolved. This is an interim steering committee that will work at this stage until the application, hopefully it's accepted. Later on .africa Foundation will be established, which should include a larger community representation from individuals, registrars, and technical community at-large.

I think the relationship metric is very clear. ICANN definitely later on will be involved. Registrars currently in Africa working to have their own registrar organization. But I think my message will be "Participate and engage." The people in this steering committee are trying their best to open up the process to ensure that the community is involved, information is out there. So currently there's a Facebook page for this project. There's a Twitter account for the project. And there is an open community mailing list, which is anyone could subscribe and get news about this project and how it's evolving. And there is a website, which is [africainonespace.org](http://africainonespace.org), which encapsulates the whole idea and strategy that we're aiming for. Thank you very much Tijani and Fatimata.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you Mohammed for all the information you've just shared. I think it was a wonderful example that you shared with us to know about this project which includes the whole of Africa and which of course has a lot of work into it. And what you just said was important. You said we have to participate and to engage. But I would like to send the ball to the private sectors court to tell them that it's also their role to participate.

Karim also asked that the states accompany that this process. I think that it's important that the private sector is also included, because this time it's the states that accompany the private sector, but they should all be engaged. I will quickly give the floor to Cheryl before going back to the end of this statement to see how we end this. Tijani will speak on her behalf.

Tijani Ben Jemaa:

Thank you Fatimata. So as you see we have as a guest here with us, as we always do since the beginning, Cheryl Langdon-Orr. She has been the President of ALAC at the time when this initiative started. And if we invite her to each of these meetings it's only because Cheryl has always been on our side, she's always encouraged us, she's done everything. She's worked for all [member nation states] to be successful. And so I cannot miss the chance to miss the chance to say that Cheryl is truly behind us, she's backing all our successes. It's thanks to her that we've succeeded. She's helped us do everything we've managed to do so far. So thank you, thank you, thank you Cheryl.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you Cheryl. Cheryl is backing us, she's behind, she's in the front, she's in the middle, she's with us throughout the process.

Cheryl Langdon-Orr:

Thank you very much. Literally two minutes of your time because as you know, I watch very closely what happens, particularly with the work with JAS and the work with the applicant support program. I'm very pleased to see and hear the discussions that are going on, but more importantly I think that I would like to say that if you do endorse this statement it's a very valuable action. And let me tell you why.

People like me are saying "too little, too late," and it is being heard, but it doesn't hurt me. It does hurt your region. So your unified voice saying "We recognize too little, too late" and then "this is what we are going to do with the resources you have now given us" is going to be a very powerful and I think a very mature, a very advantageous position to take. It's very easy for us to keep saying "it's too late and therefore boo-hoo."

What I think I'm seeing and hearing with the plans in just the few minutes I've been here is that you're going to say "Okay, we've got our twippons, we've got our Q Codes, we've got our pieces of paper, we got the support that Anne-Rachel can give us and she is limited, but we are going to take the reins in this



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region and make sure business, community, government and everyone else who needs to know about this knows about it in the next few months.”

Anything and I can speak on behalf of at least the Chair of the ALAC because I know his thoughts on this matter, anything we can do to assist you, just let us know. Other than that, Godspeed, and my everlasting respect to you all. Thank you.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

Thank you Cheryl. Thank you for this speech. So Jean-Jacques, I think you raised your hand. I will give you the floor now and then please be brief because we don't have time left.

Jean-Jacques Subrenat:

Okay. Thank you Madame Chair. This is Jean-Jacques Subrenat speaking. I would like to further discuss on what Tijani just said about the fact that financial support provided by ICANN for those applicants who need access to this financial support. I understand that there's a time limit because we have one cycle now and we do not know whether or not there will be another round after this one. But I think we should go beyond this one single case of application for top level domains, this new gTLD.

So I think it's important that this community, that is to say the community of developing countries, need support. And the people who run an organization as complex as the ICANN do not have this reflect of integrating this idea into their train of thought. So I would suggest that we lean on this and that we take it as a stepping stone, but merely as an example, not as the only one.

So you can think of ICANNs growth and maturation through an example such as this one so that we can reflect how much attention, well intended attention that is from the whole of the community for the needs of one part of our community. Thank you.

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Fatimata Seye Sylla: Thank you very much Jean-Jacques. As always, your comment was very accurate. Thank you for that recommendation. Yes okay, you have a minute.

Male: My intervention will be in the fact that we all know that Africa needs more work with Ann at her office and yesterday I was interacting with one of the senior members of ICANN and I got to understand that we have about 141 staff and over 100 are based in the US. And this confirmed the issue, actually impacts negatively in the kind of work we all expect the likes of Ann to be doing. She can't split herself or share herself into two, but she needs that kind of support to be able to reach out to a lot more people that we should also be looking for.

So Madame Chair, I would suggest if there is a way that we can bring that in our discussion to ICANN, in terms of (inaudible) in the employment schedule or procedure; and to help in both the office that will assist the African region, and also help those who are doing their job there to probably improve on it. Thank you.

Fatimata Seye Sylla: Thank you very much. Okay, you will be the last one. And very short please Mary.

Mary Uduma: Yes very short. I think we all know that ICANN is trying to shop for a vice-President for Africa. And our position is that since we're expecting a new CEO for ICANN, I think it should be the new CEO that will do that. The outgoing one should not be the person to get us the VP for Africa. I'm saying it openly here because we are all Africans and some of you read our online communications on this, so I think I'm not sure we should go into communicate but to have written the Board already on that. Thank you.

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Fatimata Seye Sylla: Okay, thank you very much. I'm going to give the floor to Aziz before we make the closing remarks.

Aziz Hilali: Thank you Fatimata. I wanted to make a comment precisely on the statement. I think there are some proposals which are very accurate, particularly what Tijani said as well as what Jean-Jacques said. As regards to what we did in Dakar, we prepared a statement, there were interesting positions. This was transmitted then and because we did not have enough time, there was a time limit which was not on our side. So the propositions that Tarek and Jean-Jacques presented be forwarded to Tijani and the team which is drafting this statement, so that we can get a more complete statement which includes these propositions, proposals.

Matter of fact I have to correct that, my interventions were not about the statement. Those were general comments. Yes but I'm proposing that we add it to the statement. Another interesting idea that we should look into is what Jean-Jacques said in the second place, so I propose that we include this in the list so that it become a matter of discussion for the next AfriCANN AFRALO meeting.

And I would add something else, Tijani just asked me to show you this pin if you're interested. This is a pin for the program and those of you who are interested can come ask for one of these to the team.

Fatimata Seye Sylla: Well thank you very much. I would now like to thank everyone, but before that, I would once again like to ask you, and I may be repeating myself but I will say it formally. I saw that Mary made proposals, that Tarek presented a proposal, I saw that Grace as well made a suggestion, Karim in turn made a suggestion too and I would like to know whether it would be possible that you all send those suggestions by email, written down tonight so that we can add all this to our draft statement. And I would like to take into account Jean-Jacques suggestions and see how we can add that to our statement.

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If you have other comments and propositions that you can send to us, we will see how we can manage. And I'm sorry, I would not like to apply pressure on you, but we would like to end with the drafting of this document as soon as possible. So that would be tonight if you will. So I would like to thank all those of you who participated here. And I would mainly like to underline the fact that there was only one person here who said "I am volunteering to work with the SARP." I think it is very important that other capacities can also be added and that other people join as volunteers to become a part of this validation panel.

I got a question from Vanda, who is not here now, and she asked me to tell you that we also need volunteers to the NomCom and that we should see how we manage to become a part of this group within ICANN. Participation is very important at every level. And as regards to outreach, I think it would be important that once again we highlight that aspect so that everyone can do what's within his reach. Once again, as regards to ICANN resources, I think we can have access to more human resources at the regional level in order to inform people to sensitize them to get a greater outreach in our region.

That's all I wanted to say. I want to thank you very much for being here today and for your interest that you showed through this activity. Thank you very much. I think I will try to finish with this session now. But before, I would like to hand over to Tijani who is my big brother and sometimes even a dad, who will in fact conclude this session.

Tijani Ben Jemaa:

Thank you Fatimata. I would simply like to say that if we push you to get your comments it's only because as you know, in order to present a request to the SARP we have deadlines and we do not have much time until the closure of this. And as regards outreach, we've only got until March 29<sup>th</sup> to get people to present their requests. So if we do not transmit to the Board tomorrow it will be too late. That's why we're pushing you to do it tonight. I would like to thank you all very much.

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We've had the honor of seeing all of you here with us, to see you engaged. And I hope that you will all go back to your region and try and find at least one person who will volunteer to the SARP. This is a very important panel, it's not just anything. We need experts in gTLDs, experts in this financial aid. So any kind of expertise in this domain can be a good addition to the SAP. So please invite your fellow citizens. So thank you all. Thank you, ALAC.; thank you, all the participants. Thank you, Board, who have been here. Thank you, thank you and goodbye.

Fatimata Seye Sylla:

We would like to thank the interpreters too who have joined us here today. Thank you, staff. Thank you, Matt. Thank you Heidi, Gisella. Thank you everyone. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Bye.

[End of Transcript]